



## Happy New Year

—By Robert KA5WSS

Let me be perhaps the last person who will wish you a happy new year for 2021. Given the travails of 2020 it seemed a given that 2021 would take a turn for the better. Let's just say that January has not thus far borne this out. However, we do have 11 more months left in the year so there's plenty of time to turn things around!

The new year also means that 2021 VOMARC dues are due! You can use the [VOMARC webpage join us page](#) to update your membership for another year. Thank you to the 14 of you who have already renewed! If you are uncertain whether you've renewed just send us a note through the [vomarc.org](http://vomarc.org) website.

Our traditional Hamfest in April will not be occurring this year. Missing two years in a row is tough, but there are no indications that COVID-19 will be sufficiently curtailed by then to make it safe. Furthermore, they city has suspended (hopefully temporarily) their free days at the vets building that made it viable for us.

Don't forget about VOMARC's breakfast and weekly nets, details of which are on the second to last page of this newsletter. We are open to ideas about changing up the format of the

weekly net to increase participation. Just a couple of hours ago we ran the net with a Q&A session at the end and that got at least a couple of conversations going. There are other ideas out there that other clubs have tried. What are they? Send us a note!

### NEXT MEETING

Wed, January 20, 2021, 7:30pm  
Zoom meeting room info will be emailed later.

**Topic:** APRS: Getting Started

## Minutes, December 16 Meeting

Meeting was once again very successfully held on ZOOM by KA5WSS

KA5WSS (Robert), KD6FIL (Dave), KG6QNT (Eileen), K6ZMF (Jack), N6TVN (Carl), WD6BOR (Darrel), KE6HID (Andrew), KH6GJV (Bill), AA6RH (Randy), N6LY (Elizabeth), K6YD (Kevin), KB6CLV (Simon), N7PIB (Sanford), N7TSQ (Joe), W8EWL (John), W6GEE (Leland), WB6TMH (Mike), KN6DON (Wendy), NJ6E (Stan), Jamil Mizirawi

Meeting called to order at 19:30 by KA5WSS

### MINUTES

Minutes from the November meeting accepted as written.

**News Letter Editor**

No updates.

### **VE Liaison**

VE Session for December 19 was cancelled because of the COVID lockdown. Looking at the possibility of testing in late January or early February if things change.

### **TREASURER**

Currently have \$4,636 in the bank. VOMARC set it up to pay dues online.

Still have not purchased a printer yet.

### **SECRETARY**

No Updates. The VOMARC Breakfast on the Air is going well.

### **Training**

School closed

### **PRESIDENT**

Contact the club on the webpage if you need help setting up Zoom for the online meetings.

The new club officers are listed on the VOMARC webpage. <https://www.vomarc.org/officers.html>

Hamfest is not looking good for 2021. The City of Sonoma is not granting free days for use of the Sonoma Vets Building. We are looking at other options and possibly doing something in the Fall.

ARRL Pacific Division Meeting on Zoom

Highlights: The 3.5 GHz band is sundowning and will not be available for Amateur Radio in the near future.

FCC is looking at charging a \$50 application fee for an amateur radio license (FCC set fee at \$35)

Extensive discussion about bringing in more young people into amateur radio.

Emergency communications is changing and amateur radio needs to adapt to stay relevant.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Donated equipment that is for sale, is posted to the VOMARC Web Page.

[https://www.vomarc.org/for\\_sale.html](https://www.vomarc.org/for_sale.html)

KD6FIL is still working on the book list.

Books in the VOMARC library available to loan.

The Sonoma County DMR net is still going at 1830 on Thursdays on talk group 31707.

**Mystery Box:** Jack, K6ZMF has the box and the Mystery Box program is on hold for a while

**Next Month's Program:** APRS – Getting Started

**PROGRAM:** Video-ZL9CI – DXepdition to Campbell Island

Meeting adjourned at 2100ish.

—Submitted by Dave KD6FIL

## **How To Get Started With APRS**

This month's topic is the [Automatic Packet Reporting System](#). Marcel Stieber (AI6MS) lives in San Jose but thanks to Zoom meetings will be joining us remotely to tell us how to get started with APRS. Presentations don't normally come with this good of a synopsis so we thought we'd pass this along to give you an idea of what's in store.

**Abstract:** The Automatic Packet Reporting System or APRS is one of the most popular digital modes in amateur radio, but also one of the most confusing ones to use. This talk will start with an introduction to APRS, what it is and how it works, and then cover some of the common use cases for the average amateur. We'll explore different hardware you can purchase, common configurations, what settings to use, and how to get the most out of APRS. After attending this talk, you should be able to go out and start using APRS for vehicle tracking, messaging, or weather monitoring.

**Presenter:** Marcel Stieber, AI6MS, has been an amateur radio operator since 2008 while attending the California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. He was President of the Cal Poly Amateur Radio Club, W6BHZ, and is currently the Industry Advisor to the club. He graduated with a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering, concentrating on RF and Communications, and writing his thesis on "Radio Direction Finding Network Receiver Design for Low-cost Public Service Applications". Marcel currently serves as Chair of the Cal Poly Electrical Engineering Industry Advisory Board. He is an Assistant Emergency Coordinator for the City of Cupertino, serving as the trustee and technical lead for the Cupertino ARES UHF repeater, W6TDM, and as the Project Lead for the Cupertino ARES ARKnet Project, which is building up a high-speed wireless intranet for the emergency responders in Cupertino. Marcel regularly volunteers at local repeater workdays as an RF technician and tower climber and enjoys providing communications for local bike rides and triathlons. He also volunteers as a Technical Advisor to several event management companies and local repeater groups. He is an ARRL Life Member and has helped license over 1500 hams since 2009, mostly recently working to develop processes and train teams using fully-remote examination methods and ExamTools. More info at [www.qrz.com/db/ai6ms](http://www.qrz.com/db/ai6ms)



—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## **ACS NET CONTROL NEEDED MARCH AND JULY**

**CONTACT MIKE WB6TMH**

## **VE Liaison News**

—By Elizabeth N6LY, VOMARC VE Liaison

### **Happy New Year!**

I hope to see many new HAM operators this year and upgraded licenses.

We are here to help you achieve your HAM Radio licensing goals.

Everyone who tests this year, for a new license or upgrade, will receive a free year membership in the Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club. Being a part of a club is a good way to increase your knowledge, get tips and pointers on using your radio, and being part of the HAM community.

Our club has many licensed HAM operators, who have a vast amount of knowledge and expertise, which they are willing to share with new members and operators.

We had scheduled a Ham License Testing session for December 19th, 2020, which we unfortunately had to cancel, due to Sonoma County invoking new Lockdown rules, because of increased cases of COVID-19. Above all, we want our members and candidates to be safe and stay healthy.

We did try an outdoor session, of 1, for one of our members (Joe), who was upgrading from Technician to General class. I am happy to report that the session worked out very well and that Joe passed his upgrade test. Congratulations, Joe!

This session was held in the driveway of one of our VEs (Sanford) and since it worked out very well, we are offering the same to other candidates on January 30th. We are limiting this session to those who reserved a space in December.

Since the VE's agreed to be safe and to conform to Sonoma County Lockdown orders, we could

safely test two candidates at a time, so space is limited. We already have 4 confirmations for our 2 time slots.

Our proposed upcoming testing dates will be April 24 and August 28. Hopefully, we will be able to hold these sessions, in our normal space at the EOC.

The FCC proposed a new licensing fee of \$35, in addition to the \$15 testing fee. To date, I haven't seen when this will take effect or how this will be paid. I will keep the club updates, when I find out more information.

Thank you.

## ARRL Pacific Division Meeting

Dave (KD6FIL) and Robert (KA5WSS) attended the ARRL Pacific Division leadership meeting held via Zoom on Saturday, December 12th. This event of division club officers was traditionally held in the East Bay but the virtual version allowed a much larger number of attendees, about 250 individuals, including those from Hawaii.

Many of the topics brought up have been pressing issues for years. The problem of attracting new blood, particular youth was discussed. Pressures on our frequency allocations was an old topic. What was new this time was the specific attack on our 3.3-3.5 GHz band, which we are destined to lose in its entirety. Our Division Director, Kristen (K6WX) pointed out that the ARRL continues to fight for access to the band, either as a continuing secondary user or at least in our current capacity until such time that 5G services build up their infrastructure.

The League is in the process of working to upgrade their computer facilities. It was noted that the ARRL website has shown its age and is in need of an update.

The League fought the FCC's proposed \$50 license fee for Amateur Radio applications asking for a blanket exemption. That was an ongoing challenge at the time. In the end the FCC was talked down to a \$35 fee, which for a 10 year license does not sound too extreme.

If you'd like to watch and listen in, [the entire meeting has been uploaded to YouTube](#).

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## Who's Doing What

Congratulations to **Joe (N7TSQ)** on passing his General Class license test! He's now pondering how to build his HF station.

Several VOMARC members met on Saturday afternoon for a quick QSO party during the [ARRL 10M Contest](#). Known participants included KD6FIL, N6TVN, KG6N, N7PIB and KA5WSS. Carl (N6TVN) made 86 contacts, mostly on CW, despite the bad conditions.

**Carl (N6TVN)** has been busy in other contests as well. He made 94 contacts in the [RAC Winter Contest](#), made 83 contacts in the Stew Perry 160M Contest, made about 200 contacts in the CW [North America QSO Party](#) and also participated in the Straight Key Night Event.

**Robert (KA5WSS)** made 152 QSOs and worked 38 mults in the [ARRL RTTY Roundup](#), mostly using FT4.

**Sanford (N7PIB)** has worked 832 parks in the [Parks on the Air](#) program.

**Ed (W1EJ)** is gathering hardware for a through panel project.

**John (W8EWL)** has installed an End Fed HF antenna.

**Simon (KN6MQP)** has a Kenwood TS-700A 2M multimode radio that he is trying to repair. The radio seems to emit a decent carrier but no voice modulation. Alternate mics and some diagnostics have so far turned up



nothing. Anyone with some advice to give would be welcome!

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## Misc

We got another copy of the key to open up the EOC whenever in person meetings are a thing again. It also provides access to the radio room. The colorful keychain should make keeping track of it a bit easier.



- In a local tie-in to the [Campbell Island](#) DXpedition shown at the December meeting, globetrotting Sanford (N7PIB) was on Campbell Island in the 1980's doing research on seabirds.
- Ed (W1EJ) has a tripod mount for a push up mast looking for a good home.
- Kevin, K6YD, is selling a [Comet CHA-250B antenna](#) that includes a small tripod for portable operation. He has used it to make contacts to Hawaii, Japan, New Hampshire and some other east coast stations. He has kept the antenna inside when not in use. He is asking \$300 for the antenna. You can reach Kevin by email at [crabsmate64@yahoo.com](mailto:crabsmate64@yahoo.com)
- Stan (NJ6E) came across an old Bear Flag Repeater Group brochure from 1974.
- Filed under "Silver Linings": VOMARC is getting a refund for part of our insurance since we were not meeting in person through most of 2020.

- Stan (NJ6E) reports that the Mount Diablo group has switched a DMR repeater to System Fusion that should be reachable from Sonoma. The K6MDD Fusion repeater is on 144.975 MHz +2.500Mhz DG-ID 00. This repeater is apparently part of the [Contra Costa Fusion Network](#).

- The [QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo](#) is making a return March 13-14! The first such event last year drew over 16,000 attendees.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## Spelling it Out

My brother was on the uss new jersey, a battleship in the us navy, i also went on a cruise on the battleship with my brother.



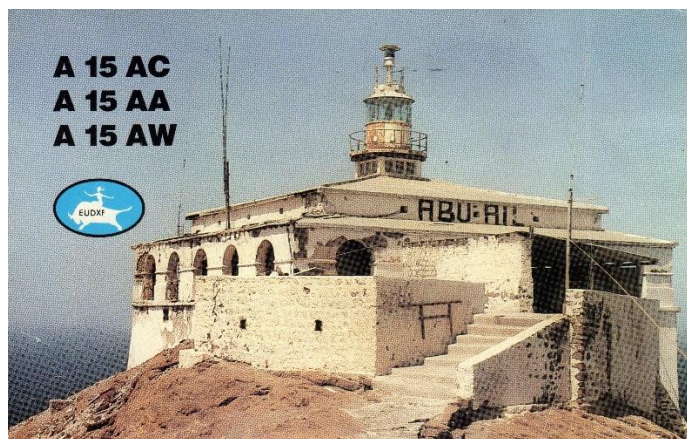
Recently I ordered flags for my callsign and they arrived today on Christmas Eve WOO HOO.

73s.

—Submitted by Kevin k6yd



# QSL Card Inbox



This one is dear to me. Abu Ail was a DXCC entity for a short period of time. You cannot make up this DXCC country today. I worked A15AW in 1990 but never confirmed. Taking a chance, I sent for a QSL card 30 years later and got a reply!

Penrhyn Atoll  
Northern Cooks Group

**E51WL**  
Warwick Latham

ITU Zone 62  
CQ Zone 32  
Grid BI00xx  
IOTA OC-082

☐ Pse ☒ Tnx QSL

Confirming QSO with	DATE	G.M.T.	Freq	RST	2 Way	Remarks
KA5WSS	10 September 2020	04:30	10.137 MHz	-02	FT8	

RIG: 1C7600 ANT: dipole

Image Courtesy of Ewan Smith, Air Rarotonga Ltd.

73s Warwick

I've heard lots and lots of South Cook Islands stations for months, so I was really happy to finally pick up E51WL of the Northern Cook Islands on FT8 from my home station.

—Submitted by Robert KA5WSS

## THE VOMARC WIRELESS

### VOLUME 25 EDITION 1

A publication of VOMARC, the Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club – W6AJF

Frank C. Jones – W6AJF

Honorary President in Perpetuity

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

Robert Barron KA5WSS – President

Ed Jacobson, W1EJ – Vice President

Dave Dammuller, KD6FIL – Secretary/Treasurer

Mike Miller, WB6TMH – Radio Officer

Moe Llanes, KI6JNU – ACS Unit Leader

Elizabeth Morris-Mowrey, N6LY – VE Liaison

VACANT – Elmer Coordinator

Darrel Jones, WD6BOR – Station Trustee for W6AJF

Eileen Adams, KG6QNT – Editor

Robert Barron, KA5WSS — Webmeister

*"Receipt of the Wireless is one of the most sought after benefits of membership in VOMARC."*—S. Marler

WEB PAGE: <http://www.vomarc.org/>

**Nets** are held every Wednesday night at 19:30 (7:30 P.M.) local, except meeting nights on the 145.350 repeater, -600 kHz, PL 88.5 Hz.

**Breakfast Nets** are held every Tuesday and Saturday morning at 7:30 AM on the 146.205, +600, PL 88.5 Hz repeater.

Comments and submissions of material may be sent to:

[Eileen@vom.com](mailto:Eileen@vom.com)

—OR—

**Valley of the Moon ARC, Inc.**

C/O Sonoma Police Department

175 First Street West

Sonoma, CA 95476

## 2021 ACS Net Control Assignments

	Name	Call
JANUARY	MOE	KI6JNU
FEBRUARY	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
MARCH	<b>PLEASE</b>	<b>SIGN UP!!</b>
APRIL	JIM	K6UUW
MAY	DICK	KF6FZM
JUNE	MOE	KI6JNU
JULY	<b>PLEASE</b>	<b>SIGN UP!!</b>
AUGUST	BILL	KJ6EIG
SEPTEMBER	SAM	W5LTP
OCTOBER	DICK	FK6FZM
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

## 2021 VOMARC Net Control Assignments

	Name	Call
JANUARY	SCOTT	KJ6QIQ
FEBRUARY	JIM	K6UUW
MARCH	MOE	KI6JNU
APRIL	DAVE	KD6FIL
MAY	ED	W1EJ
JUNE	FRANK	KG6N
JULY	MOE	KI6JNU
AUGUST	CARL	N6TVN
SEPTEMBER	SAM	W5LTP
OCTOBER	DICK	KF6FZM
NOVEMBER	MIKE	WB6TMH
DECEMBER	DARREL	WD6BOR

## VOMARC MEMBERSHIP 2021

Membership Dues: \$15/year individual; \$5/year family member at same address.

VOMARC encourages its members to join the ARRL. More information is available at [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org).

QST is available to blind and physically handicapped individuals on audio cassette from the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Call 1-800-424-8567.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ APT: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CALL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

VOMARC Membership: Complimentary with Class—Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Moment, From the Database Queen:

Dues may be mailed to VOMARC in care of the Sonoma Police Department, 175 1<sup>st</sup> St West, CA 95476, or brought to the next meeting. Your check should be made payable to: **VOMARC**.